



An Alternate View of the Late Byzantine Sanctuary Screen

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AT SOME POINT BETWEEN the Triumph of Orthodoxy and the fall of Byzantium the chancel barrier, which had afforded the laity views of the bema through large, intercolumnar spaces, was transformed into a solid wall of images that physically and visually divided the sanctuary from the nave. There is little consensus among art historians or church scholars about when the final form of the sacred barrier was achieved. Drawing from a broad and often conflicting set of written and visual sources, scholars have situated the screen's closure anywhere from the eleventh century to the post-Byzantine period.[1] Repeated analysis of the relevant texts, fragments of templon screens, and panel paintings has done little to pinpoint the moment of transition. The most secure chronological evidence for the construction of an opaque barrier and its decoration with icons is furnished by masonry screens painted to look like stone templa with inserted panel paintings or, more simply, rendered as solid walls with devotional imagery. Yet, in discussions of the Byzantine templon, this body of evidence has never been fully

1 See, for example, A. Grabar, "Deux notes sur l'histoire de l'iconostase d'après des monuments de Yougoslavie," *ZRVI* 7 (1961): 17–22; V. Lazarev, "Trois fragments d'épistyles peintes et le templon byzantin," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 4 (1964–65): 139; M. Chatzidakis, "L'évolution de l'icône aux 11e–13e siècles et la transformation du templon," *XV CEB* (Athens, 1979), 3:165–69, 182–88; A. W. Epstein, "The Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier: Templon or Iconostasis?" *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 134 (1981): 26; K. Weitzmann, "Icon Programs of the 12th and 13th Centuries at Sinai," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 12 (1984): 93–94; C. Walter, "A New Look at the Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier," *REB* 51 (1993): 213.

assembled or analyzed.[2] As I demonstrate here, this evidence is crucial to our understanding of both the final form of the screen and the relationship of icons to this barrier.

At least sixty churches and chapels from the Late Byzantine period are furnished with sanctuary screens built of local fieldstones coated in plaster and painted with sacred imagery (see Catalogue).[3] The height of the preserved screens averages 1.9 m, tall enough to restrict views of the sanctuary interior but short enough to allow the faithful to see the sacred image painted in the conch of the apse.[4] A narrow portal provided access to the sanctuary.[5] From the nave, this opening framed views of the altar and the painted decoration immediately behind the table but restricted broader visual access into the sanctuary. Although sixty churches with built screens already constitute a large body of evidence, the original number was certainly higher. Unlike their carved stone counterparts, masonry screens were not bonded with the lateral walls of the church and many could have been damaged or removed over the course of time. The number also increases substantially if one considers evidence from excavated churches, among them six chapels at Mistra built in the last Byzantine centuries.[6]

In the absence of unambiguous written testimony, the masonry screens constitute the most reliable chronological witnesses for the construction of a solid barrier and its decoration with icons. Inscriptions provide secure dates for thirteen of the churches; many of the others can be situated chronologically through an analysis of painting style. Of the sixty churches, twenty-four are dated to the thirteenth and twenty-three to the fourteenth century. Those remaining can be placed in the fifteenth century or must be categorized more generically as "Late Byzantine." The evidence offered by the masonry screens demonstrates that the placement of icons into the intercolumnar spaces of the templon must have been fairly common by the end of the thirteenth century.

That many of the masonry screens closely imitate stone templa encourages comparison between built and carved types. The screens in St. Paraskeve in the Geraki castle (mid-fifteenth century),[7] the Virgin Eleousa (Zoodochos Pege) in the Geraki castle (1430/31),[8] and St. Anna at Anisaraki, Crete (1457–62; fig. 1)[9] are painted to look like stone templa. Their icons, elongated and with rounded upper borders, are recessed in imitation of inset panels. The screens in the three churches are also painted with decorative motifs commonly carved on templon supports and architraves, such as vine scrolls and split-leaves within triangular borders. The sanctuary screens of St. George at Staro Nagoričino (1313–18)[10] and St. George in the Geraki castle (fourteenth century)[11] combine stone elements,

2 Earlier studies on the sanctuary screen or on monumental painting have included a relatively small number of masonry examples. For screens in Serbia, see G. Babić, "La décoration en fresques des clôtures de choeur," *ZbLikUmět* 11 (1975): 3–49. For screens in Greece, see Chatzidakis, "L'évolution," 167–69; N. K. Moutsopoulos and G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ* (Thessalonike, 1981), 10; S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Osservazioni iconografiche sulla pittura monumentale della Grecia durante il XIII secolo," *CorsiRav* 31 (1984): 208–10. Relatively few of the masonry screens were known when they were dismissed as a body of evidence by A. Wharton, who saw them as provincial examples reflecting "the peculiar circumstances of unpretentious, non-metropolitan buildings"; Epstein, "Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier," 27.

3 I have assembled this number from published sources and from personal observation; the actual number is undoubtedly much higher. The Late Byzantine screens are quite different from the 10th- and 11th-c. carved examples in both Cappadocia and Greece, which were generally pierced by large archways or openings. On the Cappadocian screens, see Walter, "New Look," 210 (with collected bibliography). The screen in the church of St. Panteleimon at Upper Boularioi in the Mani (991/92) appears to have resembled those in Cappadocian churches of the same period. See N. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* (Athens, 1995), 366.

4 Whenever possible, the height of the templon has been recorded for individual churches in the Catalogue; see nos. 3, 12–13, 17, 20–21, 29, 36–37, 42, 45. The average height of men in this period, at least based on 14th-c. skeletons, was 1.7 m or 5 feet 6 inches; statistics on height in this period, based on skeletal evidence, derive from a chapter on village men that I am completing for a volume on painting and piety in the Late Byzantine village.

5 The dimensions of the sanctuary portal in one late 13th-c. church, St. Nicholas at Vlachiotes in Epidauros Limeras, are 1.70 × 0.65 m. In many cases, the portals are narrower. S. Koukiare, "Ὁ Ἅγ. Νικόλαος στοῦ Βλαχιώτη," *Ἀντίφωνον· Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Καθηγητὴ Ν. Β. Δρανδάκη* (Thessalonike, 1994), 246. A number of the portals are crowned by an arch.

6 N. Drandakes, "Ἀνασκαφὴ παρεκκλησίων τοῦ Μυστρᾶ," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1952): 497–519.

7 G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 25, figs. 29–35.

8 Ibid., 108, 110–12.

9 L. Lassithiotakis, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 (1970): 191, figs. 251–52; M. Borboudakis, K. Gallas, and K. Wessel, *Byzantinisches Kreta* (Munich, 1983), 40 fig. 15, 221; I. Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (Leiden, 2001), 207–10.

10 On this point, see Grabar, "Deux notes" (above, n. 1), 18; B. Todić, *Staro Nagoričino* (Belgrade, 1993), pls. 84–86.

11 Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι*, 48–52, 54, 55 n. 73 (with earlier bibliography).

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Fig. 1 Anisaraki (Kandanos), Crete, St. Anna; Cat. no. 57 (photo: author; all unattributed photographs in this chapter by the author)

Fig. 2 Staro Nagoričino, St. George; Cat. no. 28 (after B. Todić, *Staro Nagoričino* [Belgrade, 1993], pl. 85)





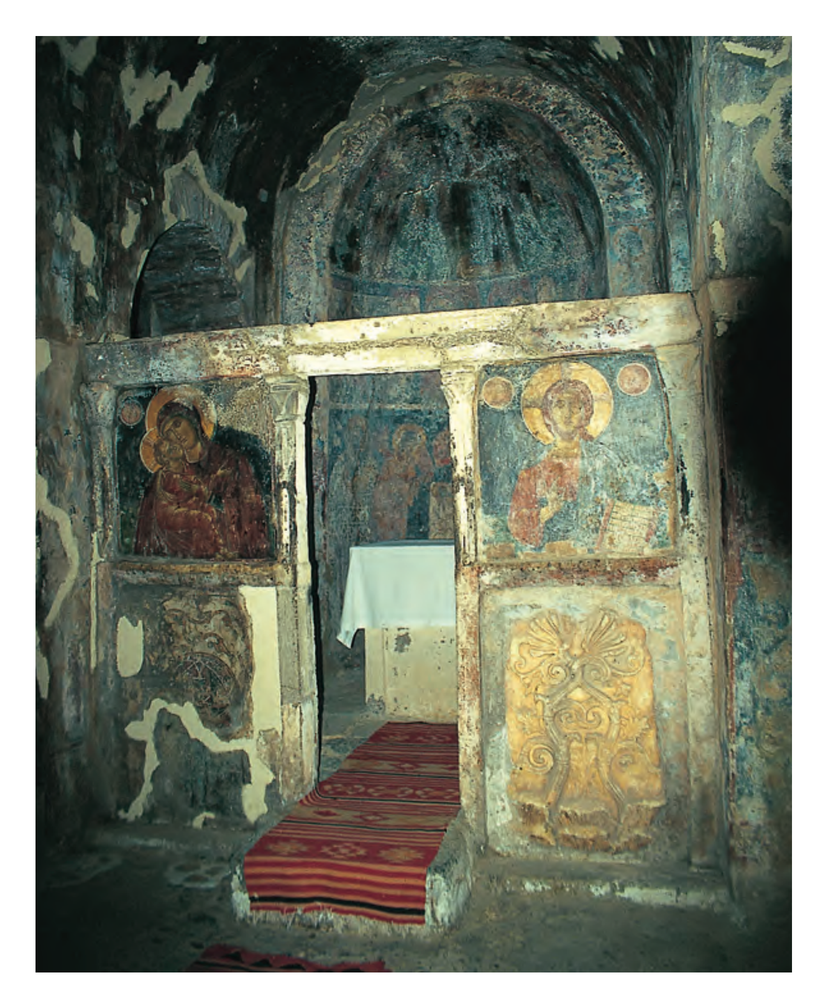


Fig. 3 Geraki kastro, St. George; Cat. no. 25 (photo: S. Kalopissi-Verti)

such as carved capitals, with plaster icons (figs. 2, 3). In St. George at Geraki the lower register of the marble templon frame includes both painted and carved decoration. Below the Virgin, the marble frame is filled with a thin plaster panel decorated with vine scrolls surrounding a medallion with intersecting squares at its center. A reused classical anthemium, probably retrieved from the ancient temple that once stood on the Geraki acropolis, fills the hollow below the icon of Christ.[12] The fragment is set into a plaster surround and visually counterbalances its painted companion. The contrasting media were obviously of little concern to those who constructed and decorated the screen.

The icons painted on the masonry screens are closely associated with panel paintings that circulated in the same period, suggesting a close link between portable paintings on wood and fixed paintings on plaster. A number of scholars have observed that the Virgin Pelagonitissa painted on the screen in St. George, Staro Nagoričino referred to an icon that circulated in the region.[13] The icon of the Virgin and Child in the church of St. George at Geraki has been compared to panel paintings from both Mount Sinai and Thera (fig. 3).[14] The icon of Anna and the infant Virgin from St. Anna at Anisaraki resembles fifteenth-century panel paintings by such Cretan artists as Angelos (fig. 1).[15] Although these examples imitate stone templa with inset icons, the majority of the masonry screens are more simply constructed as high, solid barriers that constitute, in effect, a solid wall of devotional images. In the small, fourteenth-century church of St. Nicholas at Polemitas, for example, oversize images of the

12 C. Bouras, "A Chance Classical Revival in Byzantine Greece," in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. D. Mouriki, S. Ćurčić, et al. (Princeton, N.J., 1995), 587, fig. 5; R. Traquair, "Laconia: Medieval Fortresses," *BSA* 12 (1905–6): 266.

13 A. Grabar, "Deux images de la Vierge dans un manuscrit serbe," in *L'art de la fin de l'antiquité et du Moyen Age*, (Paris, 1968), 1:543–54, 3: pl. 139c; Grabar, "Deux notes," 18; L. Hadermann-Misguich, "*Pelagonitissa* et *Kardiotissa:* Variantes extrêmes du type *Vierge de Tendresse*," *Byzantion* 53 (1983): 9–16.

14 Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι*, 54 n. 73; M. Georgopoulou-Verra, "Θήρα," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 30.2 (1975): 336, pls. 242–43.

15 See, for example, N. Chatzidakis, *Icons of the Cretan School (15th–16th Century)*, exh. cat., Benaki Museum (Athens, 1983), 26.



Archangel Michael and the titular saint decorate the north and south halves of the masonry barrier (fig. 4).[16]

A large group for study, the sixty masonry screens provide important information not only about the form of the Late Byzantine screen but also about its decoration, both the side facing the nave and, practically unknown, the side facing the sanctuary. The masonry screens preserve the best in situ evidence for the program of devotional images that was available to both the laity and the clergy. The nave side of the screen offers an intercessional program most often consisting of icons of Christ and the Virgin.[17] In some cases these representations are supplemented by portraits of the titular saint or by saints of biographical import to individual donors or small communities.[18] In a number of churches, an icon of the titular saint replaces the portrait of the Virgin on the north half of the screen;[19] rarely, the titular saint takes the place of Christ.[20] The composition known as the Deesis can also be found on the screen, usually on the south half.[21] The large icons were intended primarily for the laity, who could address devotional prayers to these intercessory figures both during the liturgy and at moments of private supplication. In many churches the east side of the screen was also decorated, although this side was viewed exclusively by the priest. Of the sixty masonry screens listed in the Catalogue, twenty-seven preserve paintings on the side facing the altar, a subject that I examine in detail in the second section of this essay. Of the remaining screens, many are unfinished, today revealing on the sanctuary side the fieldstones from which they are constructed; it is possible that they, too, were once painted.[22] Still other screens are plastered, but years of salt or smoke accretions cover any evidence of painting.

The bilateral character of many of the masonry screens and the close affinities of plaster icons with their wooden counterparts urge comparison to a subgroup of Byzantine icons decorated on two sides.[23] The majority of the preserved bilateral icons from the Byzantine period can be dated to the thirteenth and

Fig. 4 Polemitas, Mani, St. Nicholas; Cat. no. 39

16 Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες* (above, n. 3), 139–40, 142.

17 See Catalogue, nos. 1, 5, 7–9, 13–14, 18–19, 21–22, 25, 37, 42–43, 46, 49, 51–54, 56.

18 See Catalogue, nos. 23, 32, 36.

19 See Catalogue, nos. 6, 26–27, 44, 50, 55, 57.

20 See Catalogue, nos. 20, 28.

21 See Catalogue, nos. 27, 38, 50.

22 It is impossible to know whether the screens were left in this condition or whether the bonding mortar and plaster eroded over time, leaving the stones exposed.

23 For the purposes of this study, I have considered only bilateral icons that were painted on both sides in a single campaign.



Fig. 5 Near Paphos, Cyprus, St. Neophytos, reverse side of templon (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)

fourteenth centuries.[24] Unlike their plaster counterparts, however, several examples from the late twelfth century, and even earlier, survive.[25] Prominent among these is a set of icons of Christ Philanthropos and the Virgin Eleousa that were placed into the icon screen of St. Neophytos near Paphos shortly after 1197.[26] The reverse sides of the icons are decorated with ornate crosses and cryptograms. The largely identical markings demonstrate that the icons were intended from the beginning as a set, particularly when installed in a stable frame (fig. 5). Scholars generally assume that icons decorated on two sides were intended for processional use. And, indeed, many bilateral icons, even in the distant countryside, imitated processional "name" archetypes from the Byzantine capital, such as the Virgin Hodegetria.[27] When not in processional use, however, it is likely that many of the bilateral icons were fixed into the intercolumnar spaces of the icon screen.[28] The large size of many of the bilateral icons supports this supposition. With heights measuring one meter and greater, many of these icons would have been of appropriate size for the openings in the screen.[29] That many bilateral icons, as in St. Neophytos, constitute part of a devotional set of panels also supports the idea that they would have been fixed into the icon screen. This is especially true for icons of the Virgin and Christ, which would have been installed on either side of the sanctuary portal.[30] But whether the panels were processional or stationary, when bilateral icons were installed in the templon screen their two sides would have supplemented, simultaneously, the sacred programs of nave and sanctuary.

Byzantine bilateral icons appear to be confined today to specific regions of the empire: Panayotes Vocotopoulos counts five from Sozopolis (now in Sofia), seven on Rhodes, nine in Ohrid, sixteen on Cyprus, seventeen in Veroia, nineteen on Mount Athos, and twenty-one in Kastoria.[31] To these can be added

24 For catalogues of bilateral icons, with collected bibliography, see P. Vocotopoulos, "Δύο παλαιολόγειες εἰκόνες στά Ἱεροσόλυμα," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 20 (1998): 304–7; D. I. Pallas, *Die Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz*, MiscByzMonac 2 (Munich, 1965), 308–32.

25 One of the oldest two-sided icons, representing St. Theodore Stratelates (originally Phib[amon]?) and the Archangel Gabriel (Cairo, Coptic Museum, no. 9083), is dated well before iconoclasm. For a recent study on the panel (with collected bibliography), see Z. Skálová, "Looking through Icons: Note on the Egyptian-Dutch 'Conservation of Coptic Icons Project' 1989–1996," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit* (= Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses, Münster, 20–26 Juli 1966; Wiesbaden, 1999), 379–80. I thank T. Mathews for this reference. Although the icon is framed, it is unclear how the two-sided panel would have been displayed.

26 C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, "The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and Its Wall Paintings," *DOP* 20 (1966): 160–61.

27 The literature on the Hodegetria icon is extensive. For a list of bilateral icons with the Virgin and Crucifixion, see Vocotopoulos, "Δύο παλαιολόγειες," 304–6. For discussions of the processional use of the icons and their confraternities (with collected bibliography), see N. Ševčenko, "Icons in the Liturgy," *DOP* 45 (1991): 45–57; eadem, "Servants of the Holy Icon," in *Byzantine East, Latin West* (above, n. 12), 547–53; M. Tatić-Djurić, "L'icône de l'Odigitria et son culte au XVIe siècle," in ibid., 557–64. For an excellent, brief discussion of the relationship of "name" archetypes and copies, see A. W. Carr, "Leo of Chalcedon and the Icons," in ibid., 579–84.

28 See Chatzidakis, "L'évolution" (above, n. 1), 167. Although many of the bilateral icons have grooves along the lower border and even, occasionally, traces of a carrying pole, other icons have no markings for attachments. Modern-day descriptions of processions refer to the icons being removed from the templon screen for specific litanies. Regarding the bilateral icon of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Crucifixion from the church of the Virgin in Lindos, Rhodes, for example, M. Potamianou notes that "[o]n the Tuesday after Easter, according to a local tradition, the people of the village carry it on their shoulders and take it from house to house in order to bless them. They still consider the icon as miracle working, and they take it from the templon every time when it is sought in a house where there is a sick [person]. On the same day after Easter they take around the contemporary icon of the Pantokrator from the same templon and the newer icon of the Prophet Elijah." M. Acheimastou [Potamianou], "Ἀμφιπρόσωπες εἰκόνες τῆς Ρόδου· Ἡ εἰκόνα τῆς Ὀδηγήτριας καὶ τοῦ Ἁγ. Νικολάου," *Ἀρχ. Δελτ.* 21.1 (1966): 63.

29 The absence of the original furnishings in most Byzantine churches unfortunately prevents this hypothesis from being thoroughly tested.

30 See, for example, the paired bilateral icons of Christ Psychosostis and the Virgin Psychosostria (Ohrid, Icon Gallery, nos. 10, 11), which are decorated on the reverse sides with the scenes of the Crucifixion and the Annunciation respectively. The icons, which date to the early 14th c., have been associated with the church of the Virgin Psychosostria in Constantinople, which was given to Gregory I, archbishop of Ohrid. Each panel measures 0.93 × 0.68 × 0.04 m. *Trésors médiévaux de la République de Macédoine*, exh. cat., Musée national du Moyen Âge-Thermes de Cluny, 9 February–3 May 1999 (Paris, 1999), 76–79 (with collected bibliography). Regarding the paired icons of Christ and the Virgin from St. Neophytos near Paphos, Cyprus, A. Papageorghiou observed that the lettering on the reverse side of the icons is identical in form to the inscriptions on the frescoes of the bema, associating both the icons and the frescoes with the same hand. Both panels measure 0.73 × 0.46 m, the small scale of the icons reflecting the size of the chapel. See *Byzantine Icons from Cyprus*, ed. A. Papageorghiou, exh. cat., Benaki Museum, 1 September–30 November 1976 (Athens, 1976), 30–33.

31 Vocotopoulos, "Δύο παλαιολόγειες" (above, n. 24), 303.

a number of "Crusader" icons at Mount Sinai. It is impossible to know whether their modern locations reflect the original distribution of bilateral icons, but the pattern is suggestive. The icons are associated with wooded areas, known locations of icon production, or ones with close trading, political, religious, or cultural ties to Constantinople or Thessalonike, two major centers of painting in this period. The solid masonry screens are restricted, for the most part, to the south of Greece, the Aegean islands, and Serbia. The masonry screens and bilateral icons are roughly contemporary and increase in number following similar chronological trajectories. We are then, I would suggest, looking at a development in the icon screen that was manifested regionally in very different ways although with similar results.

The collection of a large number of bilaterally decorated masonry screens encourages the reconsideration of the meaning, within the context of church painting and rite, of the terms "front" and "back," "obverse" and "reverse." One might legitimately ask whether or not it is fair to divorce the two sides of an icon or icon screen from each other when viewing their imagery. Recent scholarship has taught us to examine the responsory aspects of the two sides of bilateral icons through the lens of liturgical and theological writings. Hans Belting, for example, has argued that a dialogue between the obverse and reverse images of a bilateral icon from Kastoria representing the Virgin and Child and the Man of Sorrows was imagined through the knowledge of liturgical hymns and homilies on the Passion (fig. 6).[32] Thus, according to Belting's reading, the Virgin, by means of her sorrowful gaze, responds emotionally to the sacrifice of her son represented on the reverse side of the panel. Such an understanding of the interrelationship of "obverse" and "reverse" may be valid, particularly

32 H. Belting, "An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," *DOP* 34–35 (1980–81): 1–16. A similar methodology has recently been applied to the two sides of the Poganovo icon; see B. Pentcheva, "Imagined Images: Visions of Salvation and Intercession in a Double-Sided Icon from Poganovo," *DOP* 54 (2000): 139–53. On the Kastoria icon and on other functions of icons decorated with the Man of Sorrows, see the entry by A. W. Carr in *The Glory of Byzantium*, ed. H. Evans and W. Wixom, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, 11 March–6 July 1997 (New York, 1997), 125–26.





Fig. 6a–b Kastoria, bilateral icon with Virgin and Child/Man of Sorrows (after M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, ed., *Holy Image, Holy Space: Icons and Frescoes from Greece* [Athens, 1988], 82–83)

when the icon was carried in procession on important feast days. Yet, when icons were installed in the templon screen, such visual comparisons would have been rendered difficult, if not impossible. Byzantine writers acknowledge that the front and reverse sides of panels could convey different meanings that were intended for different viewers. In describing the Tablets of the Law given to Moses, for example, Gregory of Nazianzos, in his second theological oration, states that the stone plaques were engraved on both sides "because the law has an obvious and hidden aspect. The obvious things belong to the crowd waiting below, the hidden to the few who attain the height."[33] Separating the two sides of bilateral works from each other similarly suggests that each image could function independently within its own spatial and sacred context. Placed within the sanctuary screen, the Man of Sorrows, an image of crucifixion, would have confronted the priest and the altar.[34] Indeed, independent of its representation on icons, the Man of Sorrows is found often within the decoration of the sanctuary, often painted within the prothesis niche carved into the north wall of small churches, a hidden space accessible only to the few, that is, visible only to those who entered the sanctuary (fig. 7). This image of Christ, which has been linked to prayers in the prothesis rite, was represented typically above the functional shelf used only by the celebrant in the preparation of the offerings.[35] The Kastoria Man of Sorrows and other bilateral icons may have had two "fronts" that, when fixed into the sacred screen, functioned independently from one other.[36] As we shall see, the decoration on the two sides of the masonry screen and the reception of that decoration were also determined by who had access to the paintings.



Fig. 7 Longanikos, church of the Dormition, Man of Sorrows

33 Norris trans., 225; SC 318:104, lines 35–39. I thank N. Constas for bringing this text to my attention.

34 For additional bilateral icons from Macedonia with the Virgin and Man of Sorrows, see Pallas, *Passion* (above, n. 24), 311, no. 8; E. Tsigaridas, "Φορητές εἰκόνες τοῦ 15ου αἰ. τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ Μουσείου τῆς Καστοριᾶς," in *Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία 324–1453 μ.Χ.* (Thessalonike, 1995), 347 (second half of the 13th c.?); A. Tourta, *Συλλογή εἰκόνων Δημοτικῆς Πινακοθήκης Θεσσαλονίκης* (Thessalonike, 1992), no. 1, 65–67 (early 14th c.); G. Kakavas, *Βυζαντινό Μουσεῖο Καστοριᾶς* (Athens, 1996), no. 29 (beginning of the 15th c.).

35 S. Dufrenne, "Images du décor de la Prothèse," *REB* 26 (1968): 297–310. See also Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι* (above, n. 7), 121–22, 167; O. Chassoura, *Les peintures murales byzantines des églises de Longanikos* (Athens, 2002), 89–90; Spatharakis, *Dated* (above, n. 9), 157.

36 Many of the bilateral icons are large, suggesting that they could easily have filled the intercolumnar spaces. The Kastoria icon, for example, measures 115 × 77.5 cm.

The Altar Side of the Screen

At least twenty-seven Late Byzantine icon masonry screens have traces of paint or more substantial compositions on the altar side (see Catalogue). Compositions similar to those on the masonry screens, as we shall see, are also found on bilateral icons. In order to provide some order to the types of decoration found on the east side of the screens, I first describe the decorative patterns and then consider the figural decoration.

A simple pattern of wavy brushstrokes in alternating rows of colors is found on masonry screens as well as on the reverse sides of numerous icons. The nave side of the screen in the early fourteenth-century church of St. John Chrysostom in Geraki, for example, is decorated with monumental icons of Christ and the church's titular saint (fig. 8); the altar side is covered in red and bluish-black wavy strokes (fig. 9).[37] In the lower register of the icon screen at St. Neophytos near Paphos, two stone slabs are decorated with large chevrons alternating with red wavy patterns (fig. 5). Patterns of wavy lines in black and red paint cover the reverse side of numerous icons in the collection of St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai (fig. 10),[38] as well as icons from Cyprus[39] and Mount Athos.[40] The existence of the motif on masonry screens in outlying regions of the empire, such as Geraki, suggests that the pattern was widespread. The wavy lines evoke the chisel marks on rough-cut stone plaques and beams, such as those on the reverse side of chancel plaques and epistyles.[41] When set into the screen, the decoration on the backs of wooden icons would have echoed these patterns of rough cutting, creating the effect of a solid stone wall, much like the altar-side decoration of the Geraki screen.

37 Moutsopoulos and Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι* (above, n. 1), 10; Chatzidakis, "L'évolution" (above, n. 1), 168. Chatzidakis incorrectly associates the decoration with the east side of the templon in the neighboring Evangelistria church. Decoration of red and blue wavy bands is found on the nave side of the screen in the church of St. Mamas near Palaiochora, Crete, dated 1355–56 (Lassithiotakis, "Εκκλησίες" [above, n. 9], 176, fig. 214).

38 Mouriki records the marbling motif on the reverse sides of twenty-one icons from Sinai dating from the late 12th to the 15th c., in *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine*, ed. K. Manafis (Athens, 1990), 105, nn. 29, 31–33, 40, 43–44, 50, 54, 65, 67–68, 70, 72, 79, 84, 86, 92, 94, 101, 120.

39 D. Mouriki, "A Thirteenth-Century Icon with a Variant of the Hodegetria in the Byzantine Museum of Athens," *DOP* 41 (1987): 404, 413–14, fig. 3; P. Vocotopoulos, "Three Thirteenth-Century Icons at Moutoullas," in *Medieval Cyprus: Studies in Art, Architecture, and History in Memory of Doula Mouriki*, ed. N. Ševčenko and C. Moss (Princeton, N. J., 1999), 161–71.

40 *Sinai*, 385 n. 25. I have not been able to verify D. Mouriki's observation concerning Athonite icons.

41 Walter, "New Look" (above, n. 1), 209–10. Regarding the stone architrave in the church of the Episkopi, Santorini, built in 1181, C. Walter notes: "Curiously, while the front of the barrier, facing towards the nave of the church, was meticulously and exquisitely decorated, the back, facing towards the sanctuary, was left completely unadorned. The stone from which the architrave was made has not even been cut straight. It would follow, in this case at least, that the side of the sanctuary barrier facing towards the laity was considered to be more important than that which faced the clergy celebrating the mysteries."



Fig. 8 Geraki, St. John Chrysostom; Cat. no. 26



Fig. 9 Geraki, St. John Chrysostom, reverse side of templon; Cat. no. 26

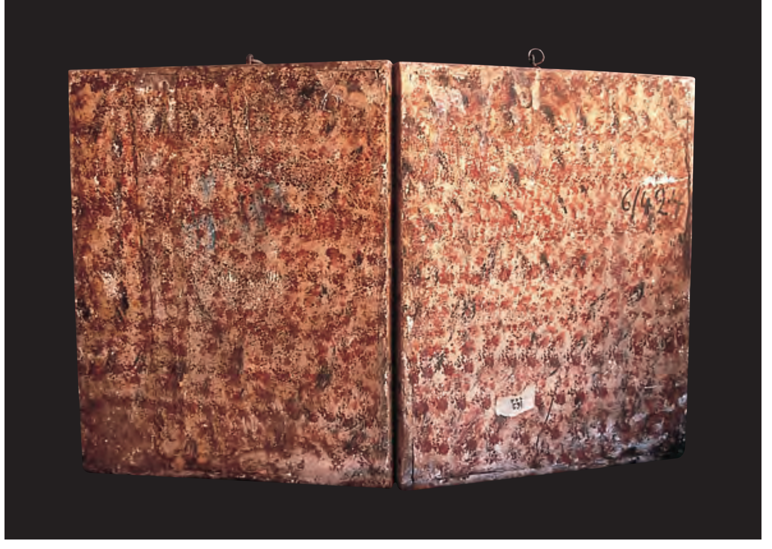


Fig. 10 Mount Sinai, icons of St. Prokopios and the Virgin, reverse side (photo: E. Bolman)

Large, foliate crosses often accompanied by cryptograms more commonly mark the screen's altar side. At St. George, Staro Nagoričino, the foliate crosses are accompanied by the common formula for "Jesus Christ Son of God" (I̅C̅ X̅C̅ Y̅C̅ Θ̅Y̅) and a cryptogram Є̅N̅ B̅K̅, which has yet to be deciphered (fig. 11). Foliate crosses also decorate the altar side of the screens in the White Church at Karan in Serbia (1340–42)[42] and the fifteenth-century church of Prophetes Elias in the Geraki castle.[43] The representation of the cross on these screens, as well as on a number of bilateral icons, demonstrates that this motif was considered highly appropriate for the decoration of the sanctuary. Their application to other transitional sites in the church, such as doorjambs and window frames, demonstrates that crosses functioned more broadly in demarcating sacred spaces and in protecting thresholds.[44] Foliate crosses decorate the reverse side of numerous Byzantine icons, including a fourteenth-century panel of Christ Pantokrator that was painted in Thessalonike (fig. 12).[45] On the icon, a second set of letters, Є̅ Є̅ Є̅ Є̅, that is, Ἑ(λένη) Ε(ὗρεν) Ἐ(λέους) Ἔ(ρεισμα) ("Helena Found a Support of Mercy"), flanks the more traditional Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστὸ)ς Νικᾷ ("Jesus Christ Conquers") painted between the upper arms of the cross. Based on its subject and large scale, the icon must have been intended for the intercolumnar space of an icon screen. The identity of the church in which the icon was originally installed is unknown, although scholars have related the shape and form of the cross to those painted in St. Nicholas Orphanos, also in Thessalonike (fig. 13).[46] In many churches the foliate cross is included in the

42 Babić, "Décoration" (above, n. 2), 33, plan 10, figs. 19–20.

43 Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι* (above, n. 7), 146 with image.

44 On the use of crosses as sacred apotropaia, see G. Babić, "Les croix à cryptogrammes, peintes dans les églises serbes des XIIIe et XIVe siècles," in *Byzance et les Slaves: Études de civilisation (Mélanges Ivan Dujčev)*, ed. S. Dufrenne (Paris, 1979), 4; C. Walter, "I̅C̅ X̅C̅ NI KA: The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross," *REB* 55 (1997): 193–220. Crosses are widely used in the minor arts to decorate the reverse sides of narrative and iconic representations. In these examples, which must be studied on a case-by-case basis, the cross is related to Byzantine beliefs about salvation and eschatology; in some cases, such as the reverse sides of ivory triptychs that served as private icons, the cross may have provided a visual focus for meditative prayer. The same notions may be applied to the carved decoration on lintels and doors of churches. For a consideration of these boundaries, see J.-M. Spieser, "Portes, limites et organisation de l'espace dans les églises paléochrétiennes," *Klio* 77 (1995): 433–45.

45 Athens, Byzantine and Christian Museum, T. 188. M. Potamianou, *Icons of the Byzantine Museum of Athens* (Athens, 1998), 56–59. For a discussion of crosses on the reverse sides of icons, see G. Chatzoule, "Αμφίγραπτη εικόνα του Αγ. Νικολάου από την Πτελέα Καστοριάς," *Βυζαντινά* 18 (1995–96): 391–94. I thank E. Tsigaridas for bringing this article to my attention.

46 *Conversation with God: Icons from the Byzantine Museum of Athens (9th–15th Centuries)*, ed. C. Baltoyanni, exh. cat., The Hellenic Centre, London, 22 May–20 June 1998 (Athens, 1998), 57.

Fig. 11 Staro Nagoričino, St. George; Cat. no. 28 (photo: after B. Todić, *Staro Nagoričino* [Belgrade, 1993], pl. 83)







fresco program of the sanctuary, often within a niche. Facing the altar table in such churches as St. Nicholas Orphanos,[47] the cross was visually incorporated into a ceremony relating to the Passion and Salvation, and it hardly mattered if it was painted on a wooden panel or directly onto plaster.[48] The application of cryptograms referring to the discovery or placement of the cross reflected mystagogical interpretations of the chamber as the site of Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection.[49] Thus, aside from the cross's role in summoning and leading the faithful in procession, when a bilateral icon was set into the screen, we might see the representation of a cross on its reverse side as a deliberate act of augmenting the sanctuary decoration. The potent symbol of the cross and the accompanying coded letters sanctified space by invocating Christ and his protective powers (see fig. 5). When the icon was installed in the sanctuary screen, however, the cross on its altar side also marked the threshold between blessed and holy spaces, mirrored word and rite, and elucidated metaphorical notions of the altar as the site of Christ's sacrifice.

Fig. 12 Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, T. 188, bilateral icon with Pantokrator and foliate cross (photo: museum).

Fig. 13 Thessalonike, St. Nicholas Orphanos, niche in south wall of sanctuary

47 A. Tsitouridou, *Ὁ Ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου Ὀρφανοῦ στή Θεσσαλονίκη* (Thessalonike, 1986), 217–18.

48 In discussing the cross and acrostic decoration on the reverse side of the late 14th-c. icon of the Virgin ἡ Ἀληθινή, today in the Gerokomeiou monastery in Patras, M. Acheimastou-Potamianou observes that "the reverse side, decorated as befits these important templon icons, faces the sanctuary, whose walls are often painted with foliate crosses and cryptograms, motifs integrated into the liturgical ceremony relating to the Passion and Salvation." Echoing Belting, Potamianou sees the reverse decoration, more importantly, as associated with the representation on the main side, "extending and complementing its theological content." The reverse side of the icon has six cryptograms surrounding a central foliate cross. See M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, "The Virgin Ἡ Ἀληθινή: A Palaiologan Icon from the Gerokomeiou Monastery in Patras," in *Byzantine East, Latin West* (above, n. 12), 472, fig. 6. For a brief discussion of "despotic icons" with crosses on the reverse and their relationship to crosses in monumental painting, see also Th. Chatzidakis, "Οἱ δύο ὄψεις τῶν Βυζαντινῶν εἰκόνων," in *First Symposium of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Archaeology and Art, Summary of Communications* (Athens, 1981), 88.

49 H.-J. Schultz, *The Byzantine Liturgy: Symbolic Structure and Faith Expression*, trans. M. J. O'Connell (New York, 1986), 77.

In humble churches with wooden screens, the side of the barrier within the sanctuary today serves as a convenient place to hang coats and tack electrical wires, modern uses of the screen that belie its medieval sanctity. Many modern wooden screens also have words written on the reverse side, especially names for remembrance in prayer.[50] Notes and sketches were not unknown in Byzantine times. The reverse side of the screen in the late thirteenth-century church of St. John the Baptist in the settlement of Megachora (Kato Kastania) near Monemvasia is painted with a dark brown sketch of a centaur.[51] The association of a centaur with the decoration of the templon screen is not uncommon in the Late Byzantine period. A centaur with a shield in his left hand and a raised sword in his right decorates a carved capital from the metropolitan church of St. Demetrios at Mistra (fig. 14).[52] A second centaur, carved in relief on a parapet slab, was found at the church of the Vlachernai in Elis.[53] In addition to the centaur, other types of hybrid creatures, such as griffins and sphinxes, were regularly carved on stone epistyles and parapet slabs. The low masonry sanctuary barrier of the Holy Trinity church at Kranidi in the Argolid, dated 1244, is painted with the figure of a griffin in imitation of a carved chancel slab.[54] Like the cross, these hybrid creatures have been viewed as apotropaia.[55] But there may be another way to interpret the representation of such figures, particularly when associated with liminal zones of the church. Victor Turner, in writing about theranthropic creatures, though not in a medieval context, saw centaurs, in particular, as the classical prototype of the liminal figure.[56] The same could be argued for the many hybrid creatures in Byzantine sculpture and paint that combine animal and human characteristics, melding, as Turner writes, "liberated intellect" and "bodily energy." Positioned at the threshold of the sanctuary, these liminal figures may reflect the priest's own passage from profane to religious man as he passed by them to assume the mantle of celebrant, a point to which I return at the end of this study.

The altar side of the screen is most often decorated with images of saints. The holy portraits can be divided into several categories: episcopal saints, monastic saints, female and military saints, and images connected symbolically with the rite of communion. The screens in ten churches, dated primarily to the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, are decorated with images of episcopal figures.[57] Although seven of the churches are found in the region of Lakonia (at Krokees, Geraki, Mistra, and in the Mani), suggesting a local trend manifested in related monuments, two are located on Crete and one in the northern Peloponnesos, demonstrating that the subject matter was more widespread. In the earliest church, St. Demetrios at Krokees (1286), only the north half of the composition survives: two frontal bishops and, adjacent to them, the representation of the Holy Keramion (fig. 15).[58] Built by the monk Gerasimos and his brothers, this small church and its painted decoration were vivid expressions of their piety. In this church and others, the bishops on the altar side of the screen stand in frontal pose, full length, carry Gospel books, and raise a single hand in



Fig. 14 Mistra, St. Demetrios, capital from templon screen (photo courtesy of the Fifth Ephoreia of Byzantine Antiquities, Sparta)

50 Personal observation.

51 According to S. Kalopissi-Verti the centaur is labeled Ο ΗΠΠΟΚΡΑΤΩ[Ν]. See N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, Ch. Konstantinide, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotide, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρά," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 419. The centaur is, unfortunately, not illustrated.

52 G. Marinos, *Άγιος Δημήτριος, η Μητρόπολη του Μυστρά* (Athens, 2002), 80, pl. 55b.

53 A. Orlandos, "Αἱ Βλαχέρναι τῆς Ἠλείας," *Ἀρχ.Ἐφ.* (1923): 18–19, fig. 30.

54 S. Kalopissi-Verti, *Die Kirche der Hagia Triada bei Kranidi in der Argolis (1244): Ikonographische und stilistische Analyse der Malereien* (Munich, 1975), 28, 237; S. Ćurčić, "Some Uses (and Reuses) of Griffins in Late Byzantine Art," in *Byzantine East, Latin West* (above, n. 12), 597–601. Ćurčić (p. 601) sees griffins as "vehicles of heavenly transport [that] may have had royal, exalted, as well as religious, assumptive meanings."

55 A. Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines du Moyen Age*, vol. 2, *XIe–XIVe siècle* (Paris, 1976), 59. See also H. Maguire, "The Cage of Crosses: Ancient and Medieval Sculptures on the 'Little Metropolis' in Athens," in *Θυμίαμα στη μνήμη της Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα* (Athens, 1994), 1:169–72.

56 V. Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.–London, 1974), 253.

57 See Catalogue, nos. 1–2, 9, 12, 14, 19, 35, 45–46, 57.

58 N. Drandakes, "Ἀπὸ τὶς τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου Κροκεῶν (1286)," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 12 (1984): 221. Drandakes includes only an illustration of the head of Athanasios. A monographic study of the church by Kalliope Diamante is in preparation.



Fig. 15 Krokees, Lakonia, St. Demetrios, bishop from altar side of screen; Cat. no. 2

blessing; their poses mirror those of the bishops depicted on the lateral walls of the same space as well as that of the priest at certain moments of the ceremony. In only one church in the Mani, the late thirteenth-century St. Nicholas in Skaltsotianika, does a bishop on the sanctuary side of the screen hold an open scroll. Here the scroll is inscribed with the preparatory words of the Prothesis prayer, which were recited by the priest as he censed the offerings.[59] A number of bilateral icons are also decorated with portraits of episcopal saints, but as a distinctive group these icons have remained unstudied.[60] With the addition of portraits of bishops to the east side of the templon, the episcopal program, which occupied the lowest register of the walls of the sanctuary, now extended full circle, beginning in the apse, continuing on the lateral walls, and ending on the altar side of the screen, enclosing the priest within a brotherhood of painted concelebrants comprised of early church authors and famous prelates.

Representations of monastic saints are found in only two churches, one in the Corinthia and one on the island of Crete. The earlier church, St. Nicholas at Klenia, was decorated before 1286/87. The date is provided by an abbreviated will inscribed on the *omophorion* of St. Gregory of Nyssa, who is represented in the south apse.[61] On the altar side of the church's screen, two saints dressed in monastic garb are found to either side of the sanctuary opening; they are divided from a third saint who was represented on the north end of the screen across from the prothesis niche.[62] Although the faces and identifying inscriptions of the figures are largely damaged, their monastic profession is asserted by their

59 The prayer on the scroll begins: "Θεὸς ἡμῶν τῶν οὐρανίων." N. Drandakes, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μάνη," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1978): 148–51. The church has been dated to the mid-13th c. Eleni Dore suggests (p. 151) that the figure may be a donor.

60 For a preliminary list of bilateral icons with representations of the Virgin on one side and saints on the other, see Vocotopoulos, "Δύο παλαιολόγειες" (above, n. 24), 306–7. Episcopal saints on the reverse sides include Nicholas (S. Petković, *The Icons of Monastery Chilandar* [Chilandar, 1997], 27, 79–81; Vocotopoulos, "Δύο παλαιολόγειες," 307, no. 16; Acheimastou [Potamianou], "Ἀμφιπρόσωπες εἰκόνες τῆς Ρόδου," 62–83; *Mother of God; Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. M. Vasilaki, exh. cat., Benaki Museum, 20 October 2000–20 January 2001 [Athens, 2002], 346–49; A. Katsioti, "Ἀμφίγραπτη παλαιολόγεια εἰκόνα στή Νίσυρο," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 25 [2004]: 63–75); the Three Hierarchs (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Icons of the Byzantine Museum of Athens* [Athens, 1998], 40–43); and St. Arsenios of Kerkyra (P. Vocotopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κερκύρας* [Athens, 1990], 4–6, no. 3). To these preserved examples may be added a bilateral icon listed in an inventory of 1233 containing the movable properties of the abandoned monastery of St. Panteleimon, Mantaia (near Smyrna). One side of the icon is decorated with the Virgin, whereas the opposite side (ὄπισθεν) is painted with St. Panteleimon, the monastery's titular saint, together with Sts. George and Demetrios. See F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* (Vienna, 1871), 4:56–57. I thank M. Parani for this reference.

61 M. Aspra-Vardavaki, "Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου στὴν Κλένια τῆς Κορινθίας," *Δίπτυχα* 4 (1986–87): 98–100.

62 Ibid., 101–2.



Fig. 16 Klenia, St. Nicholas, unidentified monastic saint from altar side of screen; Cat. no. 3

vestments and by the remnants of the first half of an identifying inscription adjacent to the southernmost saint, Ο ΟΣΙΟΣ Π(Α)ΤΗΡ ΗΜ(ΩΝ), "our holy father" (fig. 16). The selection of monastic saints for the altar side of the screen supports the theory that the church at Klenia was the katholikon of a small monastery.[63] The sanctuary screen in St. Michael the Archangel at Sarakina, a fourteenth-century Cretan church, is painted with images of St. John Kalyvites and St. Antony (figs. 17–18).[64] St. John is represented widely in the south of Greece and the Greek islands. St. Antony, too, was frequently included in the painted programs of Late Byzantine churches on Crete. Images of monastic saints are also found on the reverse sides of bilateral icons.[65] These icons, in such locations as Mount Athos, often depicted saints of importance to the monastic community, and we might assume the same for the figures represented on the altar side of the screens.

In three churches in the Mani, Crete, and Kythera, female saints or military saints are depicted on the sanctuary side of the screen. In St. George, a thirteenth-century church in the village of Mina in the Mani, portraits of the Archangel Michael and a female saint, perhaps Barbara, are painted to the north of the sanctuary portal (fig. 19).[66] Opposite them is the Prophet Elijah, a figure who is found on the reverse side of bilateral icons from Mount Athos and Cyprus.[67] In the fourteenth-century church of St. George near Sklavopoula in Crete, the east side of the screen is painted with a portrait of St. Paraskeve (fig. 20).[68] Female saints are also found on the reverse sides of bilateral icons. The most

63 Ibid., 140.

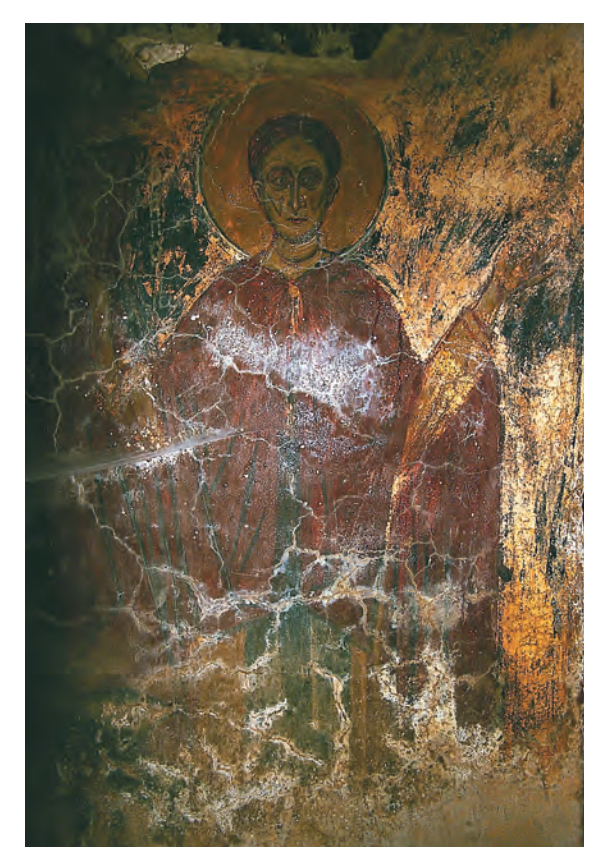
64 Lassithiotakes, "Ἐκκλησίες" (above, n. 9), 145, fig. 177 (St. Antony). I thank N. Ševčenko for her suggestions regarding the identity of St. John.

65 Vocotopoulos, "*Δύο παλαιολόγειες*" (above, n. 24), 306–7. Monastic saints include St. Sabbas (Petković, *Chilandar* [above, n. 60], 30, 99) and Athanasios the Athonite (*Treasures of Mount Athos*, exh. cat., Museum of Byzantine Culture [Thessalonike, 1997], 2:20; M. Potamianou, "Παρατηρήσεις σέ δύο ἀμφιπρόσωπες εἰκόνες τῆς μονῆς Παντοκράτορος στό Ἅγιον Ὄρος," *Δελτ. Χριστ. Ἀρχ. Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 20 [1998]: 309–16). Other icons are decorated with saints who are often connected with monastic spirituality. See, for example, icons representing on the reverse St. Gerasimos (Vocotopoulos, "*Δύο παλαιολόγειες*," 291–97), John the Baptist (ibid., 307, no. 17; *Mother of God* [above, n. 60], 434–37), and Symeon the Stylite (Vocotopoulos, "*Δύο παλαιολόγειες*," 307, no. 20).

66 Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες* (above, n. 3), 134–35. For a similarly represented St. Barbara, located within a niche on the south wall of the chapel of the Virgin (?) at St. Demetrios, Pourko, Kythera, see M. Chatzidakis and I. Bitha, *Corpus de la peinture monumentale byzantine de la Grèce. L'Île de Cythère* (Athens, 1997), 176 fig. 22, 177. The painting dates to the end of the 13th c.

67 Petković, *Chilandar*, 110–12; S. Sophocleous, *Icons of Cyprus, 7th–20th Century* (Nicosia, 1994), 91–92, pls. 30a, b.

68 Lassithiotakes, "Ἐκκλησίες" (above, n. 9), 174, fig. 212.







Figs. 17–18 Sarakina, Crete, St. Michael, monastic saints on altar side of screen; Cat. no. 42

Fig. 19 Mina, St. George, saints on altar side of screen; Cat. no. 4 (photo: after N. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* [Athens, 1995], 135, fig. 3)

Fig. 20 Trochalou (Troula) near Sklavopoula, Crete, St. George, female saint on altar side of screen; Cat. no. 37 (after K. Lassithiotakis, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 [1970]: fig. 212)



famous example is the thirteenth-century wooden relief panel of St. George, which is painted with two female saints on the reverse, most likely Marina and Catherine.[69] A large icon of the Virgin Hodegetria with a representation of St. Barbara on the reverse has been associated with the church of St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessalonike. According to A. Xyngopoulos, who first published the work, there is no indication that the icon was ever used in processions.[70] Although female saints were occasionally represented on the nave side of masonry screens,[71] their representation within the sanctuary is problematical. Canon law, as is well known, strictly prohibited women from entering this sacred space.[72] Images of female saints, however, occasionally appear in this location as sacred intercessors, particularly on behalf of donors who share their names. This is the case, for example, in the church of the Transfiguration in Pyrgi, Euboea, where the representation of St. Kalliope in close proximity to the altar may have reflected the patronage and supplication of a local woman who bore the same name as the saint.[73] Representations of female saints may have responded to particular conditions set by patronage, but we should be equally aware of the funerary and onomastic associations of the saints selected for representation on these walls. Paraskeve, for example, is often represented in funerary contexts, both in cemetery churches for which she serves as titular saint and in chapels containing burials.[74] The Archangel Michael, as is well known, is often represented in burial chapels. The presence of these saints in the sanctuary may be linked to the prayers for the living and the dead. Their portraits, like the names written on wooden screens for the modern priest, may have constituted reminders of individuals or entire congregations to be recalled in commemorative prayer.

The representation of the Communion of Mary of Egypt is found on the altar side of the sanctuary screen in a single church dated to the late thirteenth century, St. Nicholas in the lower settlement of Geraki (fig. 21).[75] The representation of the Abbot Zosimas and St. Mary within Byzantine sanctuary decoration is not unusual; the pair appears on the east wall of the sanctuary in at least five other churches of the Middle and Late Byzantine periods.[76] Their depiction on the altar side of the screen in St. Nicholas, has long been considered unique. Apart from the monumental context, the scene decorates the reverse side of a fourteenth-century bilateral icon painted, most likely, in Thessalonike (fig. 22).[77] As an image of the Communion of a lay penitent, the subject of the Communion of St. Mary fits well into the sanctuary program, particularly the altar side of the screen, whether in monumental painting or on the back of the bilateral icon. In St. Nicholas, the relationship of the painted figures and the actual celebrant is immediate. The figures of the abbot and penitent, slightly smaller than life size, flanked the location from which the priest would dispense Communion. The gestures of the figures appear to parallel the motions of the

69 *Conversation with God* (above, n. 46), 48–55.

70 The icon measures 1.19 × 0.91 m. See A. Xyngopoulos, "Εἰκὼν τῆς Θεοτόκου Ὁδηγητρίας," *Ἐπ.Ἑτ.Βυζ.Σπ.* 3 (1926): 135–43, repr. in idem, *Θεσσαλονίκεια Μελετήματα* (Thessalonike, 1999). Xyngopoulos dates the image of the Virgin to the 14th c.; the reverse side of the icon might be slightly later in date.

71 See, for example, the representations of Anna and the infant Virgin from the church of St. Anna, Anisaraki (fig. 1); the representation of Anna on the templon in the cave church of the Forty Martyrs of Grammousa, Lakonia (A. Bakourou, "Τοιχογραφίες ἀπὸ δύο ἀσκηταριὰ τῆς Λακονίας," *Πρακτικὰ τοῦ Α′ Τοπικοῦ Συνεδρίου Λακωνικῶν Μελετῶν* [Athens, 1983], 428, figs. 28, 29); and the icon of St. Catherine from the Penteli Cave, Attica (D. Mouriki, "Οἱ βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῶν παρεκκλησίων τῆς Σπηλιᾶς τῆς Πεντέλης," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 7 [1973–74]: 99, pls. 28, 29).

72 S. Gerstel, "Painted Sources for Female Piety in Byzantium," *DOP* 52 (1998): 93.

73 M. Georgopoulou-Verra, "Τοιχογραφίες τοῦ τέλους τοῦ 13ου αἰώνα στήν Εὔβοια· Ὁ Σωτήρας στό Πυργί καί ἡ Ἁγία Θέκλα," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 32.1 (1977): 10, 14–15, pl. 14.

74 Gerstel, "Painted Sources," 98–102. The female monastic saint Kallinike is also represented on the north wall in the sanctuary of St. Demetrios, Pourko, on Kythera. Chatzidakis and Bitha, *Corpus* (above, n. 66), 170 fig. 13, 172.

75 Moutsopoulos and Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι* (above, n. 1), 61–71.

76 Tokalı Kilise, New Church, prothesis (A. Epstein, *Tokalı Kilise: Tenth-Century Metropolitan Art in Byzantine Cappadocia*, DOS 22 [Washington, D.C., 1986], 68, 83); Pigeon House Church, Çavuşin, Cappadocia (C. Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce: Le programme iconographique de l'abside et de ses abords* [Paris, 1991], 19, 346); Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou, Cyprus (A. and J. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* [Stourbridge, 1964], 56–57); St. Demetrianos, Dali, Cyprus (S. Boyd, "The Church of the Panagia Amasgou, Monagri, Cyprus, and Its Wallpaintings," *DOP* 28 [1974]: 324); church of the Archangel Michael, Ano Archanes, Crete (1315–16; Spatharakis, *Dated* [above, n. 9], 44).

77 Potamianou, *Icons of the Byzantine Museum*, 72–75; *Conversation with God* (above, n. 46), 106–11.





Fig. 21 Geraki, St. Nicholas, St. Mary of Egypt and Abbot Zosimas; Cat. no. 18

Fig. 22 Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, T. 188, bilateral icon (photo: museum)

actual priest and communicant; the abbot, the figure of the priest, holds a chalice in which fragments of the eucharistic offering are clearly visible, and extends a spoon to the approaching Mary. Mary, for her part, reaches her hands out in the manner prescribed for those approaching the threshold to partake in Communion. The scene's placement in this location was clearly influenced by the service; the celebrant viewed the painted Communion when he exited the sanctuary to encounter the approaching faithful. The faithful, for their part, saw the priest stand between the images of the Virgin and Christ on the nave side of the screen.

Viewing the Altar Side of the Screen

For centuries barriers had existed between the clergy and laity. The rubrics of euchologia provide evidence for the withdrawal of the clergy from the faithful. These instructions, some as early as the eighth century, regulated the audibility of specific prayers by employing such vocal cues as μεγαλοφώνως, ἐκφώνως, μυστικῶς, and καθ' ἑαυτὸν.[78] The priest uttered some prayers aloud on behalf of the congregation; others he quietly intoned or read silently to guarantee his own purity before undertaking the sacred rite. Through the careful control of his voice the priest withheld certain prayers from the uninitiated, creating an auditory barrier between the ordained and the community of faithful. In the Early Byzantine period the laity was distanced from the sanctuary by the vocabulary of "fear and awe" adopted by some clergymen;[79] raised vocal tones and intimidating expressions were intended to prevent laypeople from approaching the mysteries without extensive preparation. By at least the eleventh century, hortatory inscriptions encircled the sanctuary; their charged words directed the faithful "to stand trembling" during moments of the rite, particularly during Christ's sacrifice. Even the angels, according to the inscribed verses, "circle the sanctuary in fear."[80] Early church texts also refer to the use of curtains in the bema, although their exact position, whether on the barrier or on the ciborium, remains a point of discussion among scholars. Veiling and unveiling the sanctuary and offerings during the liturgy constituted an important ritual component that gave rise to numerous metaphorical associations.[81] With these screens already in place by the medieval period, one must ask why the Byzantines felt the need to create a solid barrier between the clergy and laity in the last centuries of imperial rule, and, more especially, why that barrier was often decorated on two sides.

That the shape of the Byzantine service was largely formed by this time argues against a liturgical impetus behind the screen's closure and decoration. Yet one could argue that the closure of the screen had the greatest impact on the priest and his experience of the church sanctuary as a sacred and hypertemporal space.[82] As we have seen, the representation of bishops on both the plaster screen and the inset wooden panels increased the number of notional concelebrants encircling the altar and priest. We must imagine that the images of concelebrants surrounding the priest on four sides must have had a potent effect, elevating the living celebrant into the company of ordained saints, at least for the duration of the ceremony. In the church of St. Michael the Archangel in Polemitas, Mani, an inscription recalling the donor Nicholas Kakomerotos, priest and *prosmonarios*, is painted next to a bishop represented on the east side of the screen.[83] In the representation of this bishop saint, who prays with the priest Nicholas in his lifetime and for him in perpetuity, we can envision a personal and professional motivation for the depiction of a prelate on the altar side of the sanctuary barrier.

78 R. F. Taft, "Was the Eucharistic Anaphora Recited Secretly or Aloud? The Ancient Tradition and What Became of It," in *Liturgy in Context: Worship Traditions of Armenia and the Neighboring Christian East* (forthcoming); G. N. Philias, Ὁ τρόπος ἀναγνώσεως τῶν εὐχῶν στὴ λατρεία τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας κατὰ τὰ χειρόγραφα εὐχολόγια Η´–ΙΔ´ *αἰώνων* (Athens, 1997), 77–128.

79 See the chapter by R. Taft in this volume.

80 See, for example, P. Speck, "Die Inschrift am Apsisbogen der Panagia Chalkeon," *Ἑλληνικά* 20 (1967): 419–21; N. Radosević-Maksimović, "A Byzantine Epigram from St. Achilius's Basilica at Mala Prespa," *ZRVI* 12 (1970): 9–13. Ethnographers report that until recent days penetration of the templon screen still inspires fear among the faithful; see, for example, E. Friedl, *Vasilika: A Village in Modern Greece* (New York, 1962), 102.

81 See the chapter by N. Constas in this volume.

82 S. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary* (Seattle–London, 1999). On the issue of temporality, see M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. W. Trask (San Diego, 1987), 71.

83 S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Ὁ ναός τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου Μιχαήλ στόν Πολεμίτα τῆς Μέσα Μάνης (1278)," in *Ἀντίφωνον· Ἀφιέρωμα στόν Καθηγητή Ν. Β. Δρανδάκη* (Thessalonike, 1994), 453; eadem, *Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits in Thirteenth-Century Churches of Greece* (Vienna, 1992), 75.

Considering the clerical audience for the paintings, it may be, then, that we need to investigate changes in the nature of the priesthood as well as alterations in popular beliefs about religious practice in the Late Byzantine period. The screen marked the church's most sacred threshold, a boundary that was crossed, in most cases, by a single person. It is this function of the screen, as the vertical extension of the sacred threshold, which may have brought about changes in the decoration of its east side. For, in stepping through the wall and across the sacred boundary, the priest undertook his own passage from "unworthy servant" to ordained celebrant,[84] elevating himself above the plane of his profane experience, a passage that was accompanied by specific prayers and changes in wardrobe. The rite of spatial passage, in other words, became a rite of spiritual passage.[85] In monastic contexts where icons were placed into the screen, this passage elevated the ordained monk above his brethren and placed him among the ranks of monastic founders and sainted concelebrants. In village churches, the primary location of the masonry screens, the married priest was often a fellow agricultural laborer; his passage through the screen was a powerful symbol of the spiritual transformation that gave him authority over his parishioners.

The decoration of the screen's east side with imagery that exhorted spiritual transformation or elevation may have been desirable in a period when priests were routinely blamed for their inability to behave in a manner befitting their profession. Anticlerical rhetoric seems to have been particularly heightened in the last centuries of the empire, and several high churchmen of the period blamed Byzantium's perilous state on the religious infractions committed by members of its own clergy.[86] Patriarch Athanasios I, in a letter to Emperor Andronikos II, claims that "the Church has been profaned and attacked, so that not only through ignorance are unworthy men brought into the clergy, but also men who are known to be unworthy."[87] The monk and writer Joseph Bryennios, who had lived in Crete for twenty years at the end of the fourteenth century, was particularly incensed at the actions of a number of priests, who "have forgotten God." He accused them of exchanging indulgences and Communion for gifts. And worse: "after having comported themselves in a dissolute manner [even the members of the clergy] approach the holy altar and officiate.... It is especially this last sin more than any of the others that brings upon us the hatred of God and exposes us to a thousand evils."[88] These sentiments are represented graphically by the inclusion of priestly infractions in a Late Byzantine scene of the Last Judgment. Among the sinners represented in the church of St. John the Baptist in Kritsa, Crete, dated 1353/54, is one labeled as Ο ΙΕΡΕΑΣ Ο ΜΗ ΦΡΟΝΤΙΖΥΝ (*sic*) ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΝ, an ambiguous reference to a priest who does not take care of the physical structure of the church or, perhaps, one who does not follow church doctrine (fig. 23).[89] The priest, who appears to wear a miter, is suspended from a chain attached to his bound right ankle and wrist; a snake, a generic symbol of sin, coils around his naked torso and neck. In the Late Byzantine period, the decoration on the altar side of a large number of preserved masonry screens, and bilateral icons suggests that it may have been deemed beneficial to encircle the priest with images of spiritual concelebrants and scenes, such as the Communion of Mary of Egypt, that prompted specific moments of the rite. Concerns about priestly virtue and correct ritual practice may have served as one catalyst for the closure of the screen and the withdrawal of the clergy as well as for the decoration of its altar side.

84 During the inaudible prayers of the Trisagion and Cherubikon, the priest refers to himself as an "unworthy servant." F. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, vol. 1, *Eastern Liturgies* (Oxford, 1896; repr. 1965), 313, 318.

85 A. Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passsage*, trans. M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee (Chicago, 1960), 22.

86 Similar sentiments were also expressed outside church circles. In the 1340s Alexios Makrembolites decried the behavior of the prelates of his time and blamed the bad fortunes of the empire on moral lassitude. See I. Ševčenko, "Alexios Makrembolites and His 'Dialogue between the Rich and the Poor,'" *ZRVI* 6 (1960): 190–92.

87 The letter has been dated ca. 1305–6. Talbot ed., 76–77, 345. See also additional complaints about the clergy and spiritual condition of the empire on pp. 62–65, 198–99; V. Laurent, *Les regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. 4, *Les regestes de 1208 à 1309* (Paris, 1971), nos. 1660, 1716, 1738, 1747–48, 1762, 1777–79.

88 Τίνες αἴτιαι τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς λυπηρῶν (Oeconomos ed., 1:228 [Greek text], 230 [French trans.]; Bulgaris ed., 3:119–23). English trans. by author.

89 S. Maderakes, "Ἡ Κόλαση καὶ οἱ ποινὲς τῶν κολασμένων σὰν θέματα τῆς Δευτέρας Παρουσίας στὶς ἐκκλησίες τῆς Κρήτης," *Ὕδωρ ἐκ Πέτρας* 3 (1978–79): 32 fig. 17, 75.

Fig. 23 Kritsa, Crete, St. John the Baptist, damned figure of a priest



Cross-cultural contacts in the period under consideration introduce another source for the decoration on the east side of the screen. Although this explanation is less credible than ones internal to Byzantine culture and practice, the use of screens in the West to segregate different communities and provide imagery appropriate to each raises interesting questions for future investigation. The time in which the Byzantine masonry screens were built and decorated—the end of the thirteenth century—saw, in the West, particularly in Mendicant churches, the rise of double-sided altarpieces that, like Byzantine screens, divided the congregation—in this case friars from laypeople—and offered decoration on each side that was specific to the devotional needs of each constituency.[90] One of the earliest preserved double-sided retables, dated ca. 1272, is attributed to the Maestro di San Francesco.[91] The panel, which has been reconstructed from ten fragments, was once placed on the altar of San Francesco al Prato. The fragments constitute less than half of the original altarpiece; its original width, according to scholarly consensus, was approximately 3.70 m.[92] Nonetheless, the surviving section provides sufficient information to assess the type of decoration that was considered appropriate to each side. Facing the friars in the choir, the panel was decorated with images of the twelve apostles and St. Francis. Only seven of the figures survive today: Sts. Francis, Simon with Bartholemew, James, John, Matthew, and Peter (fig. 24).[93] Dillian Gordon has suggested that the inclusion of St. Francis on this side would have given visual expression to a theme dear to the friars—their founder as the thirteenth apostle.[94] The side facing the laity was divided into four compartments, the external ones occupied by Isaiah and St. Antony, and the interior ones with the scenes of the Deposition and Lamentation. The scenes of Christ's Passion on the nave side of the panel were visually linked with the crucifix suspended above the altar, a relationship that would have been easily perceived from the nave.

Many of the churches with masonry screens are located in the Peloponnesos, a region inhabited by both Byzantines and Latins in the late thirteenth century. In this period, Franciscan churches were located at Clarenza, in the northwestern Peloponnesos, and in Corinth, a city close to, among others, the

90 There is a large body of literature on double-sided altarpieces in Italy. See most recently D. Gordon, "Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Perugian Double-Sided Altarpieces: Form and Function," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. V. Schmidt (New Haven, 2002), 229–49; D. Cooper, "Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in Pre-Tridentine Umbria," *JWarb* 64 (2001): 1–54. Related to the issues presented here, see also J. Gardner, "Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure," in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo: Il contributo dell'analisi tecnica alla storia dell'arte*, Atti del XXIV Congresso C. I. H. A., Bologna, 1979, ed. H. W. van Os and J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322.

91 D. Gordon, "A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco," *Burlington Magazine* 124 (February 1982): 70–77; J. Schultze, "Ein Dugento-Altar aus Assissi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 10 (1961–63): 59–66; E. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting. An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 163, 171.

92 Gordon, "Perugian ;Provenance," 76.

93 I follow D. Gordon's reconstruction, which corrects earlier configurations of the figures and scenes on both sides of the altarpiece.

94 Gordon, "Perugian Provenance," 76.



Fig. 24 Perugia, San Francesco al Prato, retable, Maestro di San Francesco, ca. 1272; reconstruction by D. Gordon (after "A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco," *Burlington Magazine* 124 [February 1982]: 74 fig. 11)

Byzantine church at Klenia.[95] As far as I know, we have no information about the original, internal decoration of Franciscan churches on the Greek mainland or islands from this period, and more research would have to be done before any connections could be firmly established.[96] And, although it is premature to suggest a direct influence of one type of bilateral screen on the development of the other, the common use of barriers as dividers of communities, and the selection of subjects for side-specific decoration require further exploration.

With the end of imperial rule over the regions discussed in this study, it appears that the altar side of the screen was no longer decorated, and, indeed, the east side of many of the screens, including that of St. Anna at Anisaraki, was whitewashed. In interviews that I conducted with priests in the Greek villages where several of the churches are located, not one could propose a reason or possible function for the painted imagery on the altar side of the screen, demonstrating that the meaning and intent behind the Late Byzantine decoration is now lost. I have proposed two explanations for the decoration of the east side of the screen, one internal and one external to Byzantium. With the publication of additional materials we will hopefully be able to refine our understanding of this Late Byzantine phenomenon.

In the late thirteenth century, the anti-Latin polemicist Meletios Galesiotes wrote that for the Latins "the place of sacrifices is open, accessible to all. Among them, sacred things are not distinct from profane."[97] At the moment in which he wrote, many Byzantine churches were already marked by a high barrier separating the nave from the sanctuary. The screen's closure through the insertion of icons into the intercolumnar spaces came at a time of broad changes in lay spirituality, changes that may have encouraged a type of private piety that was best served by large-scale, yet highly personal, images in closest proximity to the sacred. One explanation for the insertion of icons into the screen, therefore, is that laymen and women of this period sought new visual images to satisfy their devotional practices, both during the liturgy and apart from the corporate rite. In this study, however, I have tried to view the change in the shape of the screen through the eyes of the Byzantine clergyman, particularly the priest at the village level. The collection of a large number of screens painted on the altar side provides new information about the types of images that surrounded the priest as he celebrated the liturgy. Confronted by the infiltration of alien religious practices and changing patterns of lay piety, the priests, particularly at the local level, found sanctuary behind the screen. There, enclosed by a high wall and embraced by hierarchs of centuries past, the priest could be transformed from unworthy servant to celebrant, could recall his parishioners in the prayers of the living and the dead, and could turn, after introspective meditations, to offer Communion to those who approached the sacred threshold.

95 Klenia is approximately 30 km from Corinth. Both Clarenza and Corinth are mentioned in Franciscan texts of the period. See G. Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente Francescano* (Florence, 1913), 2:264.

96 See the chapter by M. Hall in this volume.

97 Kolbaba ed., 147, trans. 158. For a more recent account of the divisions between the two modes of being, see Eliade, *Sacred and the Profane* (above, n. 82).

Catalogue of Solid Masonry Templa

This catalogue includes churches in which the templon screen takes the form of a wall or is filled with masonry icons.

13th century

1 **St. Michael the Archangel,** Polemitas, Mani, 1278.

Nave side: Virgin and Child "Η ΠΛΑΤ[ΥΤΕΡΑ]" (north); Christ enthroned (south)

Sanctuary side: frontal hierarch holding a cross with adjacent inscription naming Nicholas Kakomerotos, priest and prosmonarios (north section)

S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Ὁ ναός τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου Μιχαήλ στόν Πολεμίτα τῆς Μέσα Μάνης (1278)," in *Ἀντίφωνον· Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν καθηγητὴ Ν. Β. Δρανδάκη* (Thessalonike, 1994), 451, 453, 466.

2 **St. Demetrios Krokeon,** Lakonia, 1286 (fig. 15)

Nave side: Holy Mandylion over portal; Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: Holy Keramion over portal; two episcopal saints, including Athanasios

N. Drandakes, "Ἀπὸ τὶς τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου Κροκεῶν (1286)," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 12 (1984): 209–10, 221; K. Diamante, "Κροκεὲς Λακωνίας· Ἡ ἀναζήτηση μιᾶς βυζαντινῆς θέσεως καὶ οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ," *Λακ.Σπ.* 12 (1994): 401.

3 **St. Nicholas,** Klenia, Corinthia, 1287 terminus ante quem (fig. 16)

Height of templon: 2.20 m

Nave side: post-Byzantine decoration

Sanctuary side: three monastic saints; one of them with partial inscription, Ο ΟΣΙΟΣ Π(Α)ΤΗΡ ΗΜ(ΩΝ); Holy Keramion over central door

M. Aspra-Vardavaki, "Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου στὴν Κλένια τῆς Κορινθίας," *Δίπτυχα* 4 (1986–87): 96, 101–2.

4 **St. George,** Mina, Mani, 13th century (fig. 19)

Nave side: St. Nicholas (north)

Sanctuary side: St. Michael the Archangel and female saint (Barbara?; north); Prophet Elijah (?; south)

N. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* (Athens, 1995), 134–35, fig. 3.

5 **Panagia tes Arias,** Naxos, 13th century

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

N. Drandakes, "Νάξος," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 21.2 (1966): 401.

6 **St. Polykarp,** Phoinikies, Kythera, 13th century

Nave side: hierarch holding book (north)

M. Chatzidakis and I. Bitha, *Corpus de la peinture monumentale byzantine de la Grèce, L'Île de Cythère* (Athens, 1997), 290–91.

7 **St. Nicholas near Geraki,** second half of the 13th century

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: Underpainting of frescoes

A. Giaoure [Bakourou], "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου κοντὰ στὸ Γεράκι," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 32.1 (1977): 92, 94–95.

8 **St. Zacharias,** Lagia, Mani, second half of the 13th century

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

N. Drandakes, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μάνη," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1978): 141, 143.

9 **Dormition of the Virgin (Panagitsa),** near Megalochori, Methana peninsula, third quarter of the 13th century

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: bishop (south section)

P. L. Vocotopoulos, "Panagitsa: A Byzantine Chapel in Methana," in *Lithostroton: Studien zur byzantinischen Kunst und Geschichte*, ed. B. Borkopp and T. Steppan (Stuttgart, 2000), 316.

10 **St. Panteleimon,** Velanidia, Epidauros Limera, last quarter of the 13th century

Nave side: no description of decoration

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρά," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 451.

11 **Ai-Strategos or Taxiarches,** near Phloka, Epidauros Limera, late 13th century

Nave side: Archangels Michael and Gabriel

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρὰ," *Πρακτ. Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 365, 368, pl. 227a; N. Gioles, "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἀϊ-Στρατηγοῦ στὸν Ἅγιο Νικόλαο Μονεμβασίας," *Λακ.Σπ.* 9 (1988): 423, 460 fig. 13.

12 **St. Athanasios,** Krokees, Lakonia, late 13th century

Preserved height of templon: 1.18 m

Nave side: Annunciation

Sanctuary side: two frontal bishops

K. Diamante, "Κροκεὲς Λακωνίας· Ἡ ἀναζήτηση μιᾶς βυζαντινῆς θέσεως καὶ οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ," *Λακ.Σπ.* 12 (1994): 403–4.

13 **St. Demetrios (St. George),** Kounoupitsa, Methana peninsula, late 13th century

Height of templon: 1.90 m

Nave side: Christ (fragmentary; south)

T. Koukoules and M. Oikonomou, "Δύο βυζαντινοὶ ναοὶ τῶν Μεθάνων· Ἅγιος Δημήτριος καὶ Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Θεολόγος," *Πελοποννησιακά* 22 (1996–97): 228, 255, 257.

14 **Evangelistria,** Geraki, late 13th-century phase

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: St. Athanasios (south); unidentifiable episcopal saint (north)

N. Moutsopoulos and G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι. Οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ* (Thessalonike, 1981), 89, 90, 94 fig. 137, 99, 134.

15 **St. John,** Sorakas, Epidauros Limera, late 13th century (?)

Nave side: paintings not visible

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρὰ," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 400 (with late 12th-century date).

16 **St. John the Baptist,** Kato Kastania, Epidauros Limera, late 13th century

Nave side: unidentifiable figure (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: centaur labeled Ο ΗΠΠΟΚΡΑΤΗΩ[Ν] (north)

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρὰ," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 419, 421.

17 **St. John the Theologian,** Kounoupitsa, Methana peninsula, late 13th century

Height of templon: 1.94 m

Nave side: traces of wallpaintings

T. Koukoules and M. Oikonomou, "Δύο βυζαντινοὶ ναοὶ τῶν Μεθάνων· Ἅγιος Δημήτριος καὶ Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Θεολόγος," *Πελοποννησιακά* 22 (1996–97): 234, 274.

18 **St. Nicholas,** Geraki, late 13th century (fig. 21)

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: Abbot Zosimas (north); St. Mary of Egypt (south)

N. Moutsopoulos and G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ* (Thessalonike, 1981), 56, 61–70.

19 **St. Nicholas,** Skaltsotianika, Mani, late 13th century

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: bishop with inscribed scroll

N. Drandakes, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μάνη," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1978): 149, 151, pl. 122b.

20 **St. Nicholas,** Vlachiotes, Epidauros Limeras, late 13th century

Height of templon: 1.90 m

Nave side: St. Nicholas (north); Virgin and Child (south)

S. Koukiare, "Ὁ Ἅγ. Νικόλαος στοῦ Βλαχιώτη," *Ἀντίφωνον. Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Καθηγητὴ Ν. Β. Δρανδάκη* (Thessalonike, 1994), 246, 254.

21 **St. Niketas,** Karavas, Mani, late 13th century

Maximum preserved height of templon: 1.70 m

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (?; south)

N. Gioles, "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἅγ. Νικήτα στὸν Καραβᾶ Μέσα Μάνης," *Λακ.Σπ.* 7 (1983): 154.

22 **Panagia Androumbevitzias,** Kambos, Messenian Mani, late 13th century

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ (south)

R. Etzeoglou, "Ὁ βυζαντινὸς ναὸς τῆς Παναγίας τῆς Ἀνδρουμπεβίτζιας στὴ Μεσσηνιακὴ Μάνη," in *Εὐφρόσυνον. Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη* (Athens, 1991), 1:162, 167–69, pl. 86a.

23 **St. Paraskeve,** Geraki kastro, late 13th century

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ and unidentifiable saint (south)

G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 25–28.

24 **Taxiarchs,** Laena near Gkortsa, Lakonia, late 13th century

Sanctuary side: Holy Keramion over door

N. Drandakes, "Σχεδίασμα καταλόγου τῶν τοιχογραφημένων βυζαντινῶν καὶ μεταβυζαντινῶν ναῶν Λακωνίας," *Λακ. Σπ.* 13 (1996): 181.

14th century

25 **St. George,** Geraki kastro, ca. 1300 (fig. 3)

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ (south)

G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 48–52 (with collected bibliography).

26 **St. John Chrysostom,** Geraki, ca. 1300 (figs. 8–9)

Nave side: St. John Chrysostom (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: wavy brushstrokes

N. Moutsopoulos and G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ* (Thessalonike, 1981), 3, 10, 13 fig. 16.

27 **St. Nicholas,** Kitta, ca. 1300

Nave side: St. Nicholas (north); Deesis (south)

N. Drandakes, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μάνην," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1979): 187, pl. 127a.

28 **St. George,** Staro Nagoričino, 1313–18 (figs. 2, 11)

Nave side: St. George (north); Virgin Pelagonitissa (south)

Sanctuary side: Foliate cross with legend IC XC ΥC ΘΥ (north); foliate crosses on south side with legend Є NBK (south)

B. Todić, *Staro Nagoričino* (Belgrade, 1993), pl. 83.

29 **St. George,** Drosopege, Mani, first quarter of the 14th century

Maximum preserved height of templon: 1.65 m

Nave side: Deesis

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, and C. Konstantinide, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Λακωνικὴ Μάνην," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1981): 263–64.

30 **St. Demetrios,** Pourko, Kythera, early 14th-century layer

Sanctuary side (within niche): military saint Theodore (?); foliate scroll (below niche)

M. Chatzidakis and I. Bitha, *Corpus de la peinture monumentale byzantine de la Grèce. L'Île de Cythère* (Athens, 1997), 173.

31 **Transfiguration,** Velanidia, Epidauros Limera, early 14th century

Nave side: covered in whitewash

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρά," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 458.

32 **St. Onouphrios,** Genna, Amari, Rethymnon, 1329–30

Nave side: Sts. Anthony, Onouphrios (north); Virgin, Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: damaged wall paintings.

I. Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (Leiden, 2001), 79.

33 **St. Blasios or Zoodochos Pege,** Copaic Valley, Boeotia, 1333

Sanctuary side: frescoes indicated

C. Koilakou, "Σπηλαιώδεις ναοί του Κοπαϊδικού χώρου," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 51.2 (1996): 73.

34 **Karan,** Bela Crkva, ca. 1332–37

Nave side: Virgin Treicherousa (south)

Sanctuary side: deacon saints; foliate crosses

A. Grabar, "Deux notes sur l'histoire de l'iconostase d'après des monuments de Yougoslavie," *ZRVI* 7 (1961): 19.

35 **St. John the Evangelist,** Kroustas (Lakkoi), Merabello, Lassithi, Crete, 1347–48

Nave side: Nativity (upper); Sts. Cerycus, John the Theologian (north); Christ, St. Menas (south)

Sanctuary side: David and Solomon (upper); unidentifiable bishop and St. Hermolaos (lower)

I. Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (Leiden, 2001), 94–95, figs. 85, 87.

36 **St. Catherine,** Geraki kastro, 14th century

Height of templon: 2.30 m

Nave side: St. Catherine, Virgin (north); Christ (south)

G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 13, 14.

37 **St. George,** Trochalou (Troula) near Sklavopoula, Crete, 14th century (fig. 20)

Height of templon: 1.65 m

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: St. Paraskeve (north)

K. Lassithiotakis, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 (1970): 174, figs. 210–12.

38 **St. George,** Vosinianika, Lakonia, 14th century

Nave side: Deesis

N. Drandakes, "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἄη-Λέου εἰς τὸ Μπρίκι τῆς Μάνης," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 6 (1970–72): 158 n. 48.

39 **St. Nicholas,** Polemitas, 14th century (fig. 4)

Nave side: Archangel Michael (north); St. Nicholas (south)

N. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* (Athens, 1995), 138–39, 142.

40 **St. Mamas,** St. Mamas, near Palaiochora, Crete, 1355–56

Nave side: wavy lines

K. Lassithiotakis, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 (1970): 176, fig. 214.

41 **Holy Apostles,** Nomia, Epidauros Limera, first half of the 14th century

Nave side: Apostle (?)

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρά," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 392.

42 **St. Michael the Archangel,** Sarakina, Selino, Chania, Crete, mid-14th century (figs. 17–18)

Height of templon: 1.65 m

Nave side: Virgin and Child (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: St. Antony (north); St. John Kalyvites (south)

M. Borboudakis, K. Gallas, and K. Wessel, *Byzantinisches Kreta* (Munich, 1983), 207; K. Lassithiotakis, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 (1970): 145, figs. 176, 177.

43 **Ai-Nikolaki,** Kastania, Messenian Mani, mid-14th century

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south); donor's inscription (now destroyed) over portal

Sanctuary side: salt accretions over paintings

N. Drandakes, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μεσσηνιακὴ Μάνη," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1980): 207–8

44 **Ai-Strategos,** Lagia, Mani, mid-14th century

Nave side: Archangel Michael (north); Christ (south)

N. Drandakes, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μάνη," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1978): 155.

45 **St. Blasios,** Krokees, Lakonia, second half of the 14th century

Maximum preserved height of templon: 1.50 m

Nave side: not preserved

Sanctuary side: lower half of vestments of saint (north)

K. Diamante, "Κροκεὲς Λακωνίας· Ἡ ἀναζήτηση μιᾶς βυζαντινῆς θέσεως καὶ οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ," *Λακ.Σπ.* 12 (1994): 412–13, 420, fig. 9.

46 **Ai-Giannaki,** Mistra, third quarter of the 14th century

Nave side: traces of Christ and Virgin

Sanctuary side: episcopal saints with monochrome phelonia

N. Drandakes, "Ὁ Ἀϊ-Γιαννάκης τοῦ Μυστρᾶ," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 14 (1987–88): 66.

47 **St. John,** Kousi-Metata, Kythera, late 14th/early 15th century

Nave side: Christ (south)

M. Chatzidakis and I. Bitha, *Corpus de la peinture monumentale byzantine de la Grèce: L'Île de Cythère* (Athens, 1997), 189 fig. 3, 191.

15th century

48 **Anonymous chapel,** Geraki kastro, ca. 1400

Nave side: no wallpaintings survive.

G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 92, 94, fig. 177.

49 **Taxiarchs,** Kato Kastania, Epidauros Limera, ca. 1400

Nave side: Christ (north); Virgin and Child (south)

N. Drandakes, N. Gioles, E. Dore, S. Kalopissi, V. Kepetzi, C. Konstantinidou, M. Konstantoudake, and M. Panayotidou, "Ἔρευνα στὴν Ἐπίδαυρο Λιμηρά," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1982): 427.

50 **St. Leo,** Briki, Mani, early 15th century

Nave side: St. Leo of Catania (north); Deesis (south)

N. Drandakes, "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἅη-Λέου εἰς τὸ Μπρίκι τῆς Μάνης," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* ser. 4, 6 (1970–72): 146, 159–64; N. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* (Athens, 1995), 128–30.

51 **St. Isidore,** Pyrgos, Mani, 1423

Nave side: Virgin or saint (north); Christ (south)

N. Drandakes, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα στὴ Μάνην," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1979): 175.

52 **St. Paraskeve,** Agios Andreas, Epidauros Limera, ca. 1430

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Ein monument in Despotat von Morea; Die Kirche des Hagia Paraskeve bei der Siedlung Hagios Andreas," *Studies in the Mediterranean World Past and Present* 11 (1988): 179, 188–89.

53 **Virgin Eleousa,** Geraki kastro, 1430/31

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 101, 108, 110–11.

54 **Anonymous church,** Palaiochora, Kythera, first half of the 15th century

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

M. Chatzidakis and I. Bitha, *Corpus de la peinture monumentale byzantine de la Grèce: L'Île de Cythère* (Athens, 1997), 105, 107.

55 **St. Nicholas,** Briki, Mani, 15th century

Nave side: St. Nicholas (north); Christ (south)

N. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινὲς τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* (Athens, 1995), 113.

56 **Prophetes Elias,** Geraki kastro, 15th century

Nave side: Virgin (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: foliate cross

G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι· Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Κάστρου* (Athens, 2001), 140, 146, fig. 286.

57 **St. Anna,** Anisaraki, Selino, Chania, Crete, 1457 (fig. 1)

Nave side: St. Anna and infant Virgin (north); Christ (south)

Sanctuary side: episcopal saints

I. Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (Leiden, 2001), 207, 209; K. Lassithiotakis, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 (1970): figs. 251–53.

Undated Examples

58 **Agios Soteras,** Kotraphi, Mani, late Palaiologan period

Nave side: no description

N. Drandakes, S. Kalopissi, and M. Panayotidi, "Ἔρευνα εἰς Μάνην," *Πρακτ. Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1979): 201.

59 **St. Nikolaos,** Germa, Mani (post-11th century/pre-1752 phase of decoration)

Nave side: no description

Sanctuary side: saint (north)

N. Drandakes, "Ἔρευνα εἰς Μάνην," *Πρακτ.Ἀρχ.Ἑτ.* (1974): 119.

60 **St. Zosimas,** Achladiakais, Crete, 15th century?

Nave side: Virgin and Child (south)

K. Lassithiotakes, "Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, Δ΄, Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," *Κρ.Χρον.* 22 (1970): 182, fig. 236.